

Proclamation 8804 of April 23, 2012

National Crime Victims' Rights Week, 2012

*By the President of the United States of America
A Proclamation*

For more than three decades, advocates from every corner of America have worked to reinforce rights, services, and support for victims of crime. Our Nation stands stronger for their efforts. Today, thousands of victim assistance programs empower survivors with the tools to rebuild their lives. Yet, when only about half of all violent crimes are reported to the police and many victims struggle to secure the help they need, we know we must do more. This week, we rededicate ourselves to securing the full measure of justice for every crime victim, resolving disparities in our criminal justice system, and preventing crimes before they occur.

The incidence of crime in the United States is an affront to our national conscience and cannot be ignored. Millions of Americans experience violent or property crime victimization every year, and still more are impacted as they help a loved one in their hour of need. Sadly, children, seniors, persons with disabilities, immigrants, and traditionally underserved communities continue to experience disproportionately high rates of victimization. Moreover, women suffer the vast majority of intimate partner violence, sexual assault, and rape. These outcomes are deplorable, and we must come together to build communities where all people have the opportunity to live in safety and security.

My Administration is committed to realizing that vision. With leadership from the Department of Justice, we are investing in programs to prevent crime, drug abuse, and violence in communities across our Nation. We are partnering with organizations and agencies at every level of government to develop robust victim services, support law enforcement, and strengthen our criminal justice system. We issued a revised definition of rape that will shed new light on how often this crime occurs, and we continue to combat sexual violence and expand support for survivors. From disrupting human trafficking networks, to fighting financial fraud, to empowering the millions who are affected by crime every year, my Administration is working to bring more Americans the services and protection they deserve. For additional information, resources, and assistance, visit www.CrimeVictims.gov.

During National Crime Victims' Rights Week, we commemorate the efforts of all who bring hope to crime victims during their darkest hour. As we reflect on the progress we have made toward ensuring fair treatment and full support for all crime victims, let us renew that fundamental American impulse to stand with those in need.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim April 22 through April 28, 2012, as National Crime Victims' Rights Week. I call upon all Americans to observe this week by participating in events that raise awareness of victims' rights and services, and by volunteering to serve victims in their time of need.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-third day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand twelve, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-sixth.

BARACK OBAMA

Proclamation 8805 of April 27, 2012

Workers Memorial Day, 2012

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

For centuries, American workers have called upon boundless drive and initiative to raise our cities, manufacture our goods, and build an economy that remains the engine and the envy of the world. Generations put their lives on the line to pursue prosperity, braving the hazards of the factory floor and the heat of the fields without protective equipment or the right to a safe workplace. Through the unbending conviction of workers, labor unions, and public health advocates, we secured that basic right over 40 years ago, helping protect Americans from death or injury. Yet, despite the progress we have made, it remains a deplorable fact that an average of 12 individuals die on the job every day. On Workers Memorial Day, we honor all who have perished, and we recommit to ensuring no worker ever has to choose between life and a paycheck.

Every year, more than 3 million Americans are injured on the job. Some will never fully recover; some will never come home at all. Tragically, many incidents occur due to preventable hazards that cast our Nation's most vulnerable workers into harm's way—in the mine shaft, on the construction site, or at the factory. This is unacceptable, and as we reflect on the terrible burden these workers and their families have borne, we must do more to fulfill the promise of a safe workplace for all.

My Administration remains committed to realizing that vision. The Department of Labor and agencies across the Federal Government are striving to defend workers' rights, hold employers accountable, and empower Americans across our country with the tools they need to stay safe on the job. We are pursuing enhanced whistleblower protections that will reinforce every worker's right to raise their voice without fear of retaliation. Over 2 years after the explosion at Upper Big Branch Mine in West Virginia, we continue to advance and enforce new standards and programs that will help ensure that tragedy was the last of its kind. And, through a variety of public-private partnerships, we are collaborating with businesses, employees, trade associations, and labor organizations to eliminate workplace hazards and strengthen our competitiveness in the global economy.

When the Congress passed the Federal Coal Mine Health and Safety Act of 1969 and the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, our Nation took great strides toward safe and healthful working conditions for all. Yet, when millions of Americans suffer workplace-related injury or illness every year, and thousands lose their lives, we know we cannot give up the fight. Today, we reflect on their sacrifice, and we rededicate ourselves to protecting the health, safety, and dignity of every worker.